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RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//SCJ2/SCJ3/SCJ5//  
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UNCLAS BOGOTA 003887

SIPDIS  
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR INL/LP AND INL/RM  
DEPT FOR WHA/AND

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [SNAR](#) [SENV](#) [KCRM](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: NAS MONTHLY REPORT FOR AUGUST

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In August, the Government of Colombia (GOC) aerielly eradicated 16,524 hectares; the Colombian National Police (CNP) seized 30 metric tons of cocaine and coca base, 17 metric tons of marijuana, and 74 kilograms (kgs) of heroin, and captured 1,973 metric tons of precursor chemicals. Manual eradication operations were marred by a record number of casualties. The interdiction team saw multiple successes in the destruction of HCl labs and capture of various illegal materials. Operation Firewall, the Joint/Combined Inter-agency operation run along Colombia's Northern Coast (Costa Caribe), successfully concluded during the first week in August. GRUIN captured several high-ranking associates of "Don Mario", dealing his organization a severe blow. END SUMMARY

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AERIAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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¶2. (SBU) For the month of August 2008, ERAD totaled a very good spray record with 16,524 hectares of coca sprayed. AT-802s operating this month were the RAPTOR (FOL San Jose del Guaviare), CONDOR (FOLs Caucasia and Larandia), and LOBO (FOL Tumaco) teams spraying 5,273, 5,491, and 5,760 hectares, respectively. This month's total of 16,524 hectares brings our calendar year total to 103,865 hectares of coca sprayed. Eradication aircraft were attacked in five hostile fire incidents in August resulting in five impacts, bringing the total to 43 hostile fire incidents for the year, resulting in 88 impacts.

¶3. (SBU) Recent rains in Nario department have hampered production somewhat, although the Tumaco Lobos continue to produce the highest spray numbers. Toward the end of the month, the Condors began to replace the Tumaco Lobos in producing the highest numbers of hectares sprayed. Although the Raptor team at San Jose is beginning to encounter better weather, the Raptors' performance continues to be hampered by the exclusion of a significant area of the Plan Conjunto Integral del Macarena (PCIM) from aerial spray. DIRAN estimates that the coca in this area represents approximately 5,000 hectares (up to 25 percent of the coca in Meta and Guaviare). The C-208 Caravan is 30 percent complete developing reconnaissance to document what, if any, coca-related operations are currently ongoing in this exclusion area. In spite of poor weather and the exclusion of large zones of coca production from aerial eradication, the contractor currently remains above the line toward the annual spray goal of 130,000 hectares, with approximately nine-thousand hectares remaining to accomplish that goal.

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MANUAL ERADICATION PROGRAM  
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14. (SBU) Phase III of the GOC's 2008 manual eradication campaign (GME program) kicked off on July 15 and will end in mid-September. Total coca eradication for Phase III through August 31 was 19,324 hectares - bringing the GME program's year-to-date total to 49,508 hectares. The pace of manual eradication picked up in August due to an increase in the number of GMEs in the field. However, with only three months left in the 2008 manual eradication campaign (the program traditionally shuts down in December) the GOC is still well short of its manual eradication goal of 100,000 hectares. At any one time, there are between 200 and 230 mobile eradication groups operating in ten departments. In August, two separate landmine incidents killed two eradicators and one security personnel. Nine eradicators and one security personnel were also injured. Through August, 23 people (11 civilians and 12 security personnel) have died during this year's manual eradication operations, surpassing the sixteen killed during the entire 2007 campaign.

15. (SBU) Separate from the GME program, the COLAR and the CNP conducted manual eradication as part of their normal operations. Through the end of August, COLAR has eradicated 8,026 hectares of coca, 203 hectares of poppy, and 11 hectares of marijuana, and the CNP has eradicated 816 hectares of coca, 119 hectares of poppy, and 12 hectares of marijuana. A total of 58,695 hectares of illicit crops (58,350 hectares of coca) have been manually eradicated through 2008.

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ENVIRONMENTAL  
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16. (SBU) In August, the interagency complaints committee received 174 new claims of alleged spray damage to legal crops. NAS paid three complaints totaling 12,390,000 COP (approximately 6,000 USD), and 11,500,000 COP (approximately 5,700 USD) in advances; 61,474,000 COP (approximately 30,000 USD) will complete these payments in September.

17. (SBU) NAS received a health complaint from four farmers in Meta stating that glyphosate caused unspecified health problems. After reviewing the case, it was determined that no spray occurred in the area on the specified day.

18. (SBU) The 18th Verification Mission, which analyzes various variables to give insight on the effectiveness of recent spray operations, is planned for September 18-25. The verification team will visit two departments, Antioquia and Nario, and Gyrocam images will be used to analyze the remaining departments. This year the mission will incorporate a manual eradication component, where raters will look for the percentage of coca that has been replanted.

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PLAN COLOMBIA HELICOPTER PROGRAM (PCHP)  
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19. (SBU) PCHP aircraft flew a total of 764.8 hours in August. PCHP Aircraft operated from Tumaco, San Jose, and Tolemaida. PCHP aircraft provided air assaults, air movements, reconnaissance, medical evacuations, and support missions for the CD Brigade and other vetted COLAR units. Air assaults continued to be an effective means of increasing security for aerial eradication spray operations and CN interdiction operations conducted by BACNA units of the CD Brigade. PCHP flew 48.4 hours supporting 15 medical evacuation flights that transported 22 patients.

110. (SBU) Aircrew continuation/mission training and aircraft qualification training were conducted throughout the month in both the UH-60 and UH-11. PCHP also qualified two maintenance test pilots in the UH-11.

111. (SBU) In May of this year 18 PCHP UH-1N helicopters were loaned to the GOC under a bilateral agreement as a no cost lease. Under the terms of this agreement the aircraft are maintained and operated exclusively by COLAR. On 15 August one of the loaned UH-1Ns (EJC 218) crashed while performing a re-supply mission to a pinnacle. The aircraft was destroyed; only one crewmember received minor injuries.

¶12. (SBU) This month PCHP aircraft performed multiple air assault operations supporting Counter Drug Brigade soldiers from Tumaco and San Jose forward operating locations destroying dozens of coca producing laboratories.

¶13. (SBU) The program continues to provide limited logistical support to the host nation Helicopter Flight School located in Melgar Air Force Base. PCHP is assisting NAS Peru's aviation program by facilitating coordination with the Colombian Air Force for three Peruvian National Police Pilots attending the school and providing personnel administration services. The Peruvian Police instructor pilot is providing helicopter flight instruction and two Peruvian Police officers are receiving rotary wing flight training.

¶14. (SBU) August was not a good month for Colombia Aviation - three helicopters were lost in separate incidents.

¶15. (SBU) On August 4, 2008 an improvised explosive device was command-detonated on a pinnacle landing zone used for training that resulted in the destruction of a Colombian Air Force helicopter (Bell 206) from the Melgar Air Base flight School. All three crew members were killed. The instructor pilot killed during this attack was also the Commander of the flight school.

¶16. (SBU) On August 17, a host nation UH-60L was destroyed in an accident while on approach to a pinnacle during an operational mission. There were no fatalities; passengers were lightly injured. The accident is still under investigation.

¶17. (SBU) PCHP continues to provide air support to the manual eradication operations in Nario. For this calendar year, PCHP has flown 290.7 hours in support of manual eradication missions countrywide.

¶18. (SBU) During August, PCHP also provided airlift support for two VIP missions. PCHP transported a STAFDEL visit from Tumaco to a manual eradication site to view an ongoing aerial eradication operation mission. PCHP provided eight helicopters for the second mission transporting the U.S. Ambassador and an international delegation that included the Vice President of Colombia. Both missions were extremely well executed demonstrating the high standards and professionalism of COLAR crews who participate in the Plan Colombia Helicopter Program.

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CNP AIR SERVICE (ARAVI) SUPPORT  
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¶19. (SBU) ARAVI's NAS-supported fleet flew 1779 mission hours in August. Seven UH-60 Black Hawks closed out the month with 133 flight hours and an Operational Readiness (OR) rate of 64 percent. The Alert System (aircraft flight data recorder) was installed on PNC 0603, and software training was completed on August 27.

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INTERDICTION  
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¶20. (SBU) During August, the CNP seized 30 metric tons of cocaine HCl and cocaine base, 18 metric tons of marijuana, and 74 kgs of heroin. The CNP also destroyed 21 cocaine HCl labs, 105 coca base labs and one heroin lab, and captured 1,973 metric tons of precursor chemicals.

¶21. (SBU) During the week of August 1-7, the Tulua Airmobile Company (2 x UH-60s, 1 x UH-II, and 50 Junglas (Colombian Antinarcotics Police Airmobile Commandos)) conducted interdiction operations in Cauca and Nario, hitting an HCl lab and capturing 17.5 kgs of heroin in a cache site in Nario. The Tulua Airmobile Company hit a second HCl lab 43 miles northwest of Popayan, destroying 736 kgs of cocaine. On August 3, the DIRAN Northern Zone captured a Go-Fast containing almost three metric tons of cocaine near the coast of Puerto Bolivar, Guajira. On August 9, the Santa Marta Junglas destroyed a cocaine HCl lab near Cucuta containing 425 kgs of solid and 2,305 gallons of liquid precursors. On August 13, the DIRAN Cucuta Company captured 44kgs of heroin at a road checkpoint near

Puerto Santander, Cucuta. On August 25, DIRAN concluded Operation Six Frontiers (Phase 10) capturing 474,601 gallons and 69.4 tons of precursor chemicals. This operation focused on interdicting precursor chemicals in the departments of Antioquia, Cordoba, and Putumayo. The Bogota Airmobile Company set up an intelligence driven roadblock outside San Jose del Guaviare and captured a jeep with 42 kgs hidden in a floor compartment. On August 26, the Santa Marta Airmobile Company, with 3 x UH60s and 3 x UH-119s, captured nine members of the Daniel Rendon Herrera (Don Mario) Uraba BACRIM. On August 26, the Bogota Airmobile Company moved by road and destroyed a cocaine HCl lab on the outskirts of La Mesa, Cundinamarca, containing 69 kgs of cocaine. On August 27, the DIRAN Chemical Group captured 4.3 metric tons of precursor chemicals near Cota, Cundinamarca. On August 27, the DIRAN Western Zone Chemical Group established a road checkpoint near Cerrito, Valle Department and captured 16.8 metric tons of precursor chemicals hidden in a gas tanker. On August 28, the DIRAN Chemical Control Group captured 5.1 metric tons of sulfuric acid at a road checkpoint near Puerto Valdivia, Antioquia. On August 30, the DIRAN Western Zone and Chemical Group captured seven kgs of heroin at a road check point near Cali.

¶22. (SBU) The US Army Special Forces Pequeñas Unidades Course began (August 7-September 26) in Pijaos, featuring close quarters combat and heavy weapons training for forty students. The Jungla International Course (July 22-December 01, 2008) continues with 16 International students and 137 Colombian Nationals (largest group in history); and the Combat Medic Course (July 16-Dec 26) continues with forty students in attendance.

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PORT SECURITY PROGRAM (PSP)  
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¶23. (SBU) In July, DIRAN's Ports and Airports Area (ARPAE) unit seized 0.6 kgs of cocaine at the Port of Pereira; 17.7 kgs of cocaine at the airport of Cali; 45.8 kgs of cocaine, 3.5 kgs of heroin and 3.7 kgs of marijuana at the airport of Bogota. NAS-Peru continues the 13-week K-9 training at the CNP K-9 Academy in Facatativa. The DIRAN K-9 Company started activities sending aveterinarian to each unit to verify dog's health conditions.

¶24. (SBU) The DIRAN polygraph unit conducted polygraph exams on 92 members of the DIRAN's Interdiction, Ports and Airports Area (ARPAE) unit. Sixty-six of them passed the exam, 24 failed, and two results were inconclusive. The ICE Polygraph Institute confirmed that one of the DIRAN polygraphists failed the exam and authorized the other two to repeat it.

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AIR BRIDGE DENIAL (ABD)  
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¶25. (SBU) There were 6422 air tracks over Colombia in August of which four were declared Unknown, Assumed Suspect (UAS). Host Nation responded to all four. Two were not located by the tracker aircraft. The other two were visually identified over the Caribbean and the information was passed on to Central American Law Enforcement Agencies. One of them was located in Guatemala and impounded by the authorities. Colombian Air Force and Navy coordinated to impound a GO-FAST vessel in the Pacific Ocean with 373 kgs of marihuana, 65 kgs of cocaine, and three weapons. Three crewmembers of the illegal vessel were arrested.

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COLOMBIAN ARMY COUNTERDRUG (CD) BRIGADE  
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¶26. (SBU) The CD Brigade's long-range surveillance Platoon (LRSP) 2 and 3 battalions continue to support aerial eradication efforts -- they conducted interdiction operations from bases in Tumaco, Nario, and San Jose del Guaviare. The first battalion is in direct support of manual eradication in the 10 kilometer buffer zone near the Colombia/Ecuador border. In August, the Brigade carried out counternarcotics operations against the FARC's 30 and 48 Fronts, and organized crime organizations in San Miguel Putumayo, Calamar Guaviare and Lopez de Micay Cauca. The Brigade secured a total of 10,691 hectares during aerial eradication operations and 441 hectares during manual eradication operations. The Brigade

destroyed one HCL lab, four coca base labs, two enemy camps, and seized 247 kgs of coca paste, 9,090 gallons of liquid precursors, 3,280 kgs of solid precursors, and 1,025 kgs of coca leaf in-process. The Brigade also confiscated two boats. During an interdiction operation, the First battalion captured a narcoterrorist in San Miguel, Putumayo.

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REESTABLISH POLICE PRESENCE PROGRAM (CARABINEROS)  
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¶27. (SBU) Carabineros squadrons are currently deployed in Putumayo, Nario and Meta Departments conducting manual eradication operations. A total of 3 squadrons are conducting operations as part of a search block against the Emerging Criminal Bands in Uraba, Choco, Antioquia and Cordoba Departments. Other squadrons continue their normal missions of rural security and security along the major lines of communications. Squadron members in Uraba working with police intelligence conducted an operation in which 130,000 rounds of AK-47 ammo was seized. The squadrons had 2 contacts with the FARC and ELN, destroyed 5 camps, seized 6 caches and destroyed 20 laboratories (both base and HCL) during August.

¶28. (SBU) The Rural Comando Operations (COR) currently has 1800 students in the basic course, 45 in the Advanced Combat Medic's course; the COR graduated 19 from the Designated Marksmanship course during August.

¶29. (SBU) Results for August were: 126 Captures(4 narcos, 2 FARC/ELN, 18 BACRIM and 102 common criminals); seized: 158 weapons , 4139 gallons of liquid precursors, 5005 kgs of solid precursors, 160 kgsof cocaine, 185 kgs of marijuana, 25 vehicles, and 76 hand grenades.

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BASE SECURITY/ROAD INTERDICTION  
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¶30. (SBU) The coordination for the next one-month Base Defense course continued. Course is scheduled to be conducted in Tumaco, Nario, and will begin once the vetting of the students has been completed.

¶31. (SBU) Operation Firewall, the Joint/Combined Inter-agency operation run along Colombia's Northern Coast (Costa Caribe) which was begun in July concluded the first week of August. The highlights of the operation included several first-time accomplishments. This was the first time that simultaneous operations were coordinated and conducted. Firewall, OPDAGGER, and Stiletto were intertwined and their conduct involved both multi-lateral and unilateral actions. The participation of the COLAR CD Brigade's recon platoon was the first time they had participated in a Firewall Operation and based on their results and willingness to be a principle contributor their participation in the future is highly recommended. One final point of note was the ability, for the first time, to forward base the joint/combined inter-agency operational base in the Gulf of Uraba in-conjunction with the Inter-agency Coordination Center (IACC) established at the DEA Headquarters on the North Coast. The IACC has been the primary operational base for the past three years and this additional capability to forward base will expand the scope of operational capabilities which bodes well for future Firewall Operations.

¶32. (SBU) The GRUIN NVD lab renovations continued through August and are currently 95percent complete. The final modifications are scheduled to be complete by mid-September.

¶33. (SBU) NAS interdiction advisor, John Hincapie, working in conjunction with the MILGP End-Use-Monitoring (EUM) program was able to identify, locate, and report on 19 NVD's within the Colombian National Police as requested by DOS EUM office (Wash).

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NAVY TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT (GRUIN)  
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¶34. (SBU) In the Month of August, the GRUIN working jointly with CTI conducted an operation against the criminal organization of Daniel



Rendon Herrera alias "Don Mario" where the number two ranking member in the organization was captured; Jhon Freddy Manco Torres alias "el indio". In a simultaneous mission, Camilo Torres Martinez alias "Fritanga" was captured in Medellin as well. The capture of these two individuals dealt a severe blow to the narcoterrorist organization of Don Mario.

¶35. (SBU) In addition, the GRUIN have conducted threereconnaissance operations against organizations belonging to los Paisas y los Nevados in the Uraba area of operations. In the three missions the unit was able to verify personnel, terrain, mobility corridors, ranch activity, vehicle movement, boat movements, and night activities in the ranches. The reconnaissance will be used for future operations against these potential targets.

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INDIVIDUAL DEMOBILIZATION PROGRAM  
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¶36. (SBU) The demobilization program continues to receive an increased number of individuals as compared to previous years, totaling 2,238 demobilized through August 31. The increase is most notable in FARC units which have lost their leadership due to successful Colombian security operations. The most common motivation for demobilization is military pressure which was up 17 percent from 2007, followed by poor quality of life and abuse. The current "carrot and stick" approach of incentives coupled with the constant military pressure is reaping great rewards for the Colombian Ministry of Defense.

¶37. (SBU) Planning for the third major event in southern Colombia encouraging demobilization was completed and will take place in San Vicente del Caguan, Caqueta, on September 10. As during previous occasions, this event will include the "Peace Through Sports" initiative and a parade of children espousing peace themes as in previous events; it will also include a Vallenato concert and the launching of dramatized video testimonials of demobilized individuals. The event discourages acceptance of recruitment of children by illegal groups and is overall designed to communicate demobilization opportunities to thousands of people who are related to members of paramilitary and guerrilla organizations.

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COMMUNICATIONS  
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¶38. (SBU) DIRAN data group accompanied MELTEC engineers to Medellin (Rio Negro International Airport) to conduct a technical site survey in support of a future network expansion project that will enable the ANTIN airport police access to the secure CNP data network which includes email, Internet, and access to national data bases. The DIRAN data group also sent a contact team to the Tulua base to conduct preventive maintenance on all of the computers and to verify the network is operating properly. The data group continues working with the Port security group on providing user support for the Export Control system (SICEX in its Spanish acronym), which is a new data base that helps to track all of the companies that engage in the export of goods from Colombia. The DIRAN single channel group displaced to Kennedy to install a TADIRAN repeater and conduct preventive maintenance on all repeaters in the area. The TADIRAN installation will increase the tactical radio coverage of the TADIRAN network. The single channel group is prepared to replace a Motorola Quantar repeater in Puerto Estella, because the current antenna naturally became degraded. The DIRAN single channel group also installed a Motorola Quantar repeater in Munchique, located in the vicinity of Popayan in the Department of Cauca. The DIRAN radio group sent a contact team to Larandia where they gave instructions to the ANTIN group and accounted for all of the communications equipment.

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WEAPONS  
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¶39. (SBU) During the month of August, 8,000 lbs of C4 explosives were delivered to Bogota, Colombia from Miami, Florida. The long

awaited C4 will be distributed to the Jungla Companies and used to destroy HCl laboratories. In addition, 800 of Sig Sauer magazines and 350 of Sig Sauer pistols arrived and will be distributed to the Jungla Companies.

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DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION (DDR)  
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¶40. (U) During a meeting with the DNE, UNODC and the Ministry of Social Protection to discuss the status of Colombia's National Household Drug Consumption survey, NAS was told that the cost to conduct the survey would be approximately 1,600 million pesos, which is 300 million more than originally budgeted for. The DNE believes that it has an additional 70 million pesos to apply to the project but is asking NAS to provide the remaining 230 million needed for the project.

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CULTURE OF LAWFULNESS  
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¶42. (SBU) Under the framework of the National Forum "Drogas y su Perspectiva en la Salud Pblica" organized by the Ministry of Social Protection, two TV commercials on drug consumption prevention were launched in August. These commercials are part of a campaign of communications media, which seeks to make parents aware of their responsibilities in the drug consumption prevention strategy. The Shared Responsibility Office will launch two more commercials at the governor's event in Popayan; these commercials link drug consumption with narcoterrorism.

¶44. (SBU) NAS has agreed to finance an additional \$230,000,000 (COP) for DNE's National Household Drug Consumption survey. CICAD Director Francisco Cumsille will be visiting Colombia to ensure that the SIDUC methodology will be implemented properly. First results will be published in December of this year. A memorandum of understanding between NAS and DNE Directors was done to establish responsibilities and obligations of the DNE with NAS.

¶45. (SBU) NAS's Culture of Lawfulness program sent five people from DIRAN to assist the Annual DARE Conference. Four of them were supported directly by DNE and the fifth was financially supported by NAS.

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MANAGEMENT  
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¶46. (U) Contract with Monsanto for continued glyphosate supplies has been signed. Deliveries to FOLs continue without disruption. Embassy intranet (OpenNet) service in the NAS Warehouse was installed. Site surveys have been underway and the encryption equipment is in the process of being ordered to extend OpenNet service to NAS offices at El Dorado airport and Guaymaral base.

BROWNFIELD